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COLLECTOR DAILY

Tanya Marcuse: *Fallen*

By Loring Knoblauch / In Galleries



JTF (just the facts): A total of 9 large scale color photographs, framed in white and unmatted, and hung against white walls in the main gallery space and the entry area. All of the works are pigment prints, made between 2010 and 2013. Physical sizes include 18×23, 30×38, 38×48, and 56×71, and the prints are available in editions of 7 or 5 (for the 56×71 prints). A small catalog of the exhibit is available from the gallery. (Installation shots below.)

Comments/Context: Tanya Marcuse's forest floor still lifes revel in the aftermath of abundance. Dotted with split pomegranates and dented peaches covered with fuzzy mold, their all-over designs recall the intricate plant form textiles of William Morris, albeit at a point when the patterns have been left to rot. Her dense designs have fallen into lushly degraded disarray, layers of leaves, twigs, wilted flowers, and decomposing fruit woven into dappled, painterly brocades.

Marcuse's compositions are overstuffed with decay, so much so that they fill the frame edge to edge with their piles of detritus and compost. Crusty end of season sunflower heads lay fallen in the murky glop of muddy moss fields, while broken egg shells are intermingled with the dark richness of wet leaves and cicada corpses. Frozen apples and peaches lie amid the wreckage of the early fall, bringing a splash of soft pink to the muted palette of degeneration. There are even a few snakes (and at least one dead mouse) to be found in these untended gardens.

But Marcuse's images are not found elegance on an orchard ramble, but instead carefully crafted in situ sculptures made to be photographed. As a result, they have much more subtle visual harmony than your average shot of the ground, her order quietly visible in the arrangement of apparent randomness. In the hands of another, these scenes might have become exercises in bland decoration, but Marcuse's compositions hum with crispness and discoverable detail. While rotting fruit still lifes over the centuries have often been meditations on the ephemeral nature of life and the inevitability of death, Marcuse's images find impressionistic beauty in the natural cycles of reuse, where blackened apple husks and thorned vines provide the gestures of intermixed abstraction.

Collector's POV: The works in this show are priced based on size: 18×23 at \$3900, 30×38 at \$6300, 38×48 at \$8200, and 56×71 at \$12000. Marcuse's work has little secondary market history, so gallery retail remains the best option for those collectors interested in following up.